

*Student evanesces after using meditation to deceive school brain scanners*

Friday, October 21, 2121

Seattle, Washington

The Department Of Suicide announced Friday that a Seattle student had ceased. Ursula Lawrence ended on October 19, 2121.

Information about her methods has been redacted from the memories of those who learned of them, per Department policy on preventing cessations. The Department wishes to express its condolences to her family, classmates, and teachers at St. Leticia's Academy.

Though the Department does extend its deepest sympathies, its investigation found that Ursula was a disturbed young woman who should have acquiesced to the systems set in place for her health and happiness. It is the belief of the Department she would still be living if she had. Blame also lies with her parents, who will face legal consequences. The Department expects all children in public schools to accept and participate in the Clean Minds Program.

The Department Of Suicide, the branch of the Center For Disease Control (CDC) concerned with children's mental health, ascertained that Ursula and two other students intentionally and illegally engaged in meditation prior to each school day. All three used mindfulness techniques to conceal their clinical depression from their school's How Are You scanners. The two students, Catherine Gabriel and Thomas Isidore, have been confined indefinitely as they are evaluated for treatment.

Describing her condition, Ursula wrote in a journal six months ago, "I wish it bothered me that I feel so awful, but I don't care about anything. It's all blank. I watch people eat and wonder if they can taste anything. I hear jokes and wonder what laughing is like, even though I can feel my face smiling. That's a joke itself. But I don't want someone to force me to feel better."

And three months ago: "Maybe I'll try to scam the scanners. It would be fun to see if I could. But I won't do it by myself. Getting a Mending alone would be so scary." She punctuated the entry with an angry face sticking its tongue out. If her parents had read her diary, as is recommended, or if she had used an Emotionally Responsive Notebook with emergency protection, the Department might have been alerted and had the opportunity to mend her.

A full mental investigation of Ursula has been conducted by accessing and reviewing her memories, as is required with each person who ends before age 18. The examination showed that she skirted treatment for depression for at least a year because she resented the mental health requirements placed on her — regular scans, compliance with government psychiatric drug diets, and personal responsibility for preserving a consistent baseline of happiness. These mandates were no different from what is prescribed to every minor in the United States.

To circumvent the scanners, she conspired with Catherine and Thomas to meet every morning in a grove near St. Leticia's. Knowing how a healthy brain should appear, they employed guided breathing techniques to quiet their minds, artificially constructing short-term emotions. After the meditation, they would have seemed calm and collected to the untrained observer, and their neuropatterns would have appeared acceptable to the How Are Yous. The Department has never before observed meditation methods so utilized.

Catherine and Thomas were Ursula's only companions at the time of her evanescence. The Department recommends that each teenager have at least five friends to sustain an adequate support network.

While the three students' actions may seem like a positive step towards alleviating their afflictions, they convened with the express intent of tricking the How Are You scanners, continuing to live in their depressed states outside of the morning hours. Ursula told Catherine and Thomas they aimed to "feel the thrill of control, for once." She believed that command of her

own actions had been ceded to the authorities that supervised her. She turned to manipulating her emotions in retaliation.

Ursula evanesced after losing hope for her future, according to the Department's analysis of her mind. She could no longer picture a genuine existence for herself and, in response, abdicated any responsibility for her current condition. The thought of undergoing How Are You scans every day weighed on her, and she believed the psychiatric remediation involved in Mendings would change her into a person unlike herself. She dreaded the possibility of losing the pleasure music brought her, her connection to her parents, and, most of all, her ability to forge authentic friendships like those she had with Thomas and Catherine. None of these things would have occurred. The fear she felt is an antiquated attitude that contributed to medical hysteria in the past and convinced many who needed medication to refuse it. All minors must take Department drugs.

The Department further found that Ursula's parents, Madonna and Joseph, failed to check their home How Are You's records and appropriately intervene. In a Department cell, they expressed regret over their neglect. Perhaps if they had taken the course of action they now see is correct, their daughter would still live.

To ensure that a community's emotions meet the mental health standards of the Clean Minds Program, students are legally mandated to pass through How Are You brain scanners at the start of each school day. A Department-certified counselor reviews each individual chart. Students whose brains match patterns seen in school shooters, bullies, gang members, depressives, bipolars, and others with mental illness are required to undergo Mental Mending remediation regimens. The treatments consist of psychiatric drug interventions of varying severity and invasiveness and of quarantine for as long as necessary.

The Department initiated Clean Minds by installing scanners at every public school in the country and establishing psychological benchmarks each school must meet, as judged by the collective average happiness of students. The program has been an unmitigated success. Youth cessations became exceedingly rare in the decades following its implementation, only occurring in one in every 20 million people under 18. School shootings became even less common.

The Department prays for no further endings.